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DEPT. OF TRANSPORTATION
PORTLAND

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To: FMCSA Docket No. FMCSA-2002-13295 - 9

This letter concerns an Oregon based company dealing with laws that exempt farm plated trucks traveling in interstate commerce, and the funds that are threatened to be withheld from ODOT. That is unless the law that exempts safety inspections on these trucks are revoked, Oregon legislature has treated its farm plated trucks the same way since 1978. There has been no increase in accidents in that time frame. ODOT already has authority to inspect all trucks, including farm plated ones. No additional inspections authority is needed for compliance. According to ODOT, Oregon farm truck accident record is so low that ODOT would not spend additional resources inspecting farm trucks anyway. Farm trucks accidents account for less than 1% of truck accidents.

It would be counter-intuitive to reject Oregon's reasonable request for exemption. Approval would mean the exemption is valid for two years and automatically reviewed. Denial means that perhaps one of the best MCSAP programs in the nation will cease to receive federal grant funds. How can that result possibly be construed to be a positive development in the national quest to improve safety?

The records show that farm trucks are not the problem with road safety. Why mess with a good program?

Sincerely,



1-14-03